A PROGRAM FOR GOD'S PEACE

25c

A CHRISTMAS HANUKKAH PROGRAM

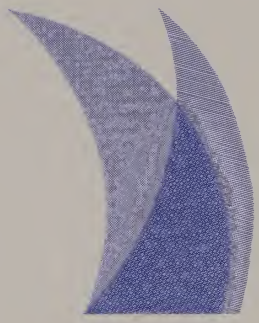
LEON PAUL

BEAUTY RATHER THAN BITTERNESS

FRATERNAL LOVE RATHER THAN FRATRICIDE

NOT CONFLICT–BUT CONCORD

Dedicated to my mother
who lighted the way of
the Old Testament for me;
and to my wife, who lighted
the way of the New
Testament for me . . .



And to Father Victor J.
Donovan, C.P., who opened
the first door to the
Christmas-Hanukkah
relationship . . . and
showed me marvelous
new lights . . .

A Christmas Hanukkah Program

by

LEON PAUL

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A Christmas Hanukkah Program

for

Catholic High Schools

Colleges

Universities

Religious Orders

Novitiates

Seminaries

Catholic Organizations

Parish Societies

Newman Clubs

. . . and Others

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Introduction

ONE of the most beautiful and significant Jewish festivals has been greatly misunderstood, and to a great extent, ignored, by most Catholics.

Hanukkah, the Feast of Lights, also known as the Feast of the Dedication, was until very recent times, a minor Jewish holiday.

For various reasons—but mainly because of its proximity to Christmas—Hanukkah has become, over the years, a festival of almost major proportions. It might almost be called a "Jewish Christmas."

Where Hanukkah was not actually opposed by Christians—it was usually ignored by them. Catholics (and probably most Protestants) saw little in Hanukkah that had any meaning for them. It was simply—a Jewish holiday.

What disturbed some Catholics was the fact that Hanukkah, a minor festival during which the Jewish people lighted candles, should be given equal billing with Christmas, the birthday of the Son of God.

Outside of the coincidence that both feasts came during December, Catholics could see no possible harmony or relationship between these two feasts.

And many Christians resented the attempts of Jews to make a big thing of Hanukkah while seeming to try to lessen the significance of Christmas.

Of course, it is true that the birthday of the King of the Jews is infinitely more important, has infinitely greater significance than Hanukkah, or any other holiday for that matter. Any attempt to reduce Christmas to the level of a winter holiday with emphasis on Santa Claus, snowmen, Jingle Bells, Rudolf the red-nosed reindeer—rather than on the birth of the Messiah—should be tactfully but firmly corrected, whether these attempts are made by Catholics, Protestants, or Jews.

However, while Christmas and Hanukkah may not seem

to be equally important, neither are they in conflict with each other. These two feasts are more closely related than most people realize.

The only conflict between these two feasts is usually in the minds or the hearts of people who are simply not aware of the historical or spiritual harmony between Hanukkah and Christmas.

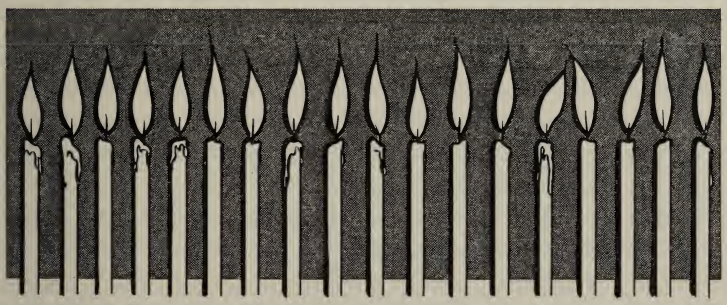
And there is harmony, very beautiful harmony, between Hanukkah and Christmas, because the Providence of God made them harmonious.

It is with the fond hope that not only harmony, but also understanding, and mutual respect, and fraternal love can come from a better understanding of the true relationship between Christmas and Hanukkah—that this booklet has been written.

It needs only the willingness and the good will of both Christians and Jews . . . the desire to " . . . lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armor of light" (Rom. 13:12).

The program suggested on the following pages can be adapted to the needs and limitations of any group interested in bettering relationships between Christians and Jews.

"It is better to light a candle than to curse the darkness."



He who loves his brother abides in the light, and for him there is no stumbling. — 1 John 2:9

Significance of Hanukkah for Catholics

HANUKKAH is a Jewish festival. It is also known as the Feast of Lights and the Feast of the Dedication. What possible significance can this Jewish holiday have for Catholics?

First of all, the events commemorated by Hanukkah are to be found in the first and second books of Maccabees—the last books of the Old Testament. As such, Hanukkah is therefore included in the Old Testament heritage which belongs as much to Catholics (and Protestants) as to the Jewish people.

It is also significant that the Catholic Church commemorates the heroes of the Books of Maccabees—the Holy Maccabees—with a Mass, on August first each year. They are the only Saints of the Old Testament commemorated in the Latin rite liturgy.

It has been said by many others but perhaps Herman Wouk expresses it best in his book, "This is My God":

"The two festivals (Christmas and Hanukkah) have one real point of contact. Had Antiochus succeeded in obliterating Jewry a century and a half before the birth of Jesus, there would have been no Christmas. The feast of the Nativity rests on the victory of Hanuka." (p. 106)

Others put it more bluntly: "No Hanukkah—no Christmas!" What is meant by this?

Very simply—When in the course of time the Messiah finally came after many centuries of waiting and praying by the Jewish people, it was necessary for Judaism to exist, for the Hebrew priesthood to be functioning, for sacrifice to be offered to God in the Temple in Jerusalem. In other words,

when the Messiah came to fulfill the Law and the Prophets—the Law and the Prophecies had to be there in order to be fulfilled!

Had Antiochus, the Syrian King, succeeded in wiping out Judaism in 168 B.C. as he fully intended to do, there would have been—if this were possible, a sort of divine embarrassment.

We can speculate somewhat along these lines: If Judaism had disappeared and all Jews had become Greeks, worshipping Greek gods, which is what Antiochus demanded of them, there would have been no high priest named Zachary, no John the Baptist, no Anne and Joachim, no Mary, no Joseph, and therefore—well—you take it from there.

In His mighty providence which brought the Jewish people out of Egypt, through forty years in the desert, and kept them faithful to Him over the centuries, God also saw to it that the Maccabees would successfully recapture the Temple from greatly superior forces and have this Temple re-dedicated to the all-holy God of Israel. Now the living river of a practicing Judaism was once again flowing in its prophetic course toward the days of the Messiah.

In its own way, Hanukkah was a preparation for the coming of the Messiah—even though the Maccabees were in no way conscious of the important part they played to make His coming possible.

The perspective of time and history tells us that only 164 years after the Temple was re-dedicated, thanks to the Holy Maccabees, the Messiah was born. He was born as, where, when and how the Hebrew prophets foretold.

Only 164 years! A very short space of time in the long history of mankind. But the providence of God was working in those years, even as it brought the People of God from Abraham to Antiochus—and beyond. . .

Hanukkah, therefore, while not a Catholic celebration, strictly speaking, can, because of its providential character, surely be adopted (and adapted) by Catholics as a non-li-

turgical ceremony—and as a preparation for Christmas, along with, and during, Advent.

Joy is the predominant note of Hanukkah. By a coincidence, the Third Sunday of Advent is celebrated by Catholics, as "Gaudete Sunday"—a Sunday in which to Rejoice.

As we explore the relationship of Hanukkah and Christmas further, we will see how much more Hanukkah can mean to Catholics—yes, and to Protestants and to anyone who calls himself a follower of Christ.

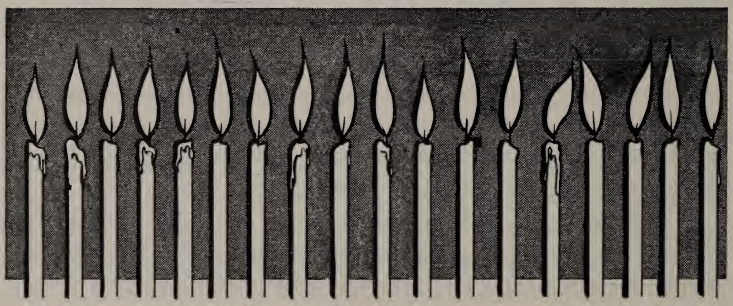
As with almost everything in the Old Testament, the signs and events often, invariably point to a future fulfillment. As St. Augustine so beautifully put it: The New Testament in the Old is concealed; the Old Testament in the New is revealed.

I have never actually heard Hanukkah called or classified as a prophecy. Yet, it does have, for me, a great richness in prophetic symbolism.

This is what I would like to discuss with you in the following pages—to explore the prophetic symbolism of Hanukkah, and the fulfillment of this Old Testament Feast of Lights (and Feast of Dedication) by Him who said:

"I am the Light of the World. He who follows me does not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of Life."—John 8:12.

Let us, then, Christians and Jews, share our light—and walk in the light—together!



The Story of Hanukkah

For authentic background, it is suggested that the First and Second Books of the Maccabees be read at the end of the Old Testament.

A brief summary of the event which is commemorated during Hanukkah, would go something like this . . .

POWER can be a terrible thing—in the hands of the wrong people. The more power they have, the more they want. It happened to Hitler and the Nazis, to Mussolini and the Fascists, to Stalin, Khrushchev and the Communists, Mao Tse Tung and his Chinese Communists, and others. It will happen wherever there are selfish, greedy tyrants in the future, just as it happened in the past.

Let us go back to about 170 years before the birth of Christ. Antiochus (IV) was king of Syria. To create a buffer state between Syria and Egypt, he invaded and captured Palestine. And in order to offset any "foreign" influences, he ordered that all the people of Palestine should become Greeks and live as Greeks, worshipping Greek gods.

To most pagans, it made little difference what gods they worshipped. But to the Jews, who worshipped the one, true, holy God of Israel, worshipping strange gods was forbidden by the first Commandment. And bowing down to worship idols was repugnant to the Jewish people. They learned a bitter lesson at the foot of Mount Sinai when many of them worshipped the Golden Calf and were punished by God.

They refused to obey the order of Antiochus, the Syrian king. So the king ordered his troops to kill any Jews who resisted his order to worship Greek idols. In fact, the great Temple in Jerusalem, the central house of Jewish worship, was taken over by Antiochus, all objects of Jewish worship removed, and Greek idols put up in various places.

The desecration of the Jewish Temple was complete—parts were used as a stable, other parts to keep pigs and other animals. For the Jews, the desecration of their Temple was the worst possible tragedy. No longer could their high priests offer sacrifice to God; no longer could they worship God in the holiest place on earth; and the practice of the Jewish religion had to be performed in secret under threat of death.

In the city of Modin, a small town some miles northwest of Jerusalem, the high priest Mattathias rebelled against the unjust edicts of King Antiochus. With his five sons, they decided to recruit as many other Jews as possible, for the purpose of recapturing the holy Temple, and restoring the worship of God, and the Jewish way of life.

Using guerrilla warfare methods, the Maccabees began to hammer away at the troops of the Syrian army. Humanly speaking, it was impossible for the Maccabees to win. They had much fewer men than the Syrians; fewer weapons; and the Jews were not trained militarily.

But their cause was placed under God. They had a courageous leader in Judas Maccabee who had great faith in the power of God. Read I Maccabees 3:16-22 . . . and 4:7-11.

It was the almighty power of the God of Israel, and the faith of Judas Maccabee and his men, that gave strength to the Jewish fighters who were able to overcome the Syrian army, and eventually, recapture the Temple.

"Then Judas, and his brethren said: Behold our enemies are discomfited: let us go up now to cleanse the holy places and to repair them.

" And all the army assembled together, and they went up into mount Sion.

"And they saw the sanctuary desolate, and the altar profaned, and the gates burnt, and shrubs growing up in the courts as in a forest, or on the mountains, and the chambers joining to the temple thrown down.

"And they rent their garments, and made great lamentation, and put ashes on their heads.

"And they fell down to the ground on their faces, and they sounded with the trumpets of alarm, and they cried toward heaven.

"Then Judas appointed men to fight against them that were in the castle, till they had cleansed the holy places.

"And he chose priests without blemish, whose will was set upon the law of God:

"And they cleansed the holy places, and took away the stones that had been defiled into an unclean place.

". . . And they built up the holy places, and the things that were within the temple: and they sanctified the temple and the courts. . ." I Macc. 4:36-48.

It was this rededication of the Temple which is commemorated at Hanukkah time—

"And all the people fell upon their faces, and adored, and blessed up to heaven him that had prospered them.

"And they kept the dedication of the altar eight days, and they offered holocausts with joy, and sacrifices of salvation, and of praise." I Macc. 4:55,56.

There is a legend that says that when the Jews looked around for oil to light the lamp before the Holy of Holies when they were rededicating the Temple, they could find only one jug of oil, enough for only one day. But, so the story goes, it burned not for one, but for eight days. And this is the miracle also commemorated at Hanukkah, giving it the name of Feast of Lights.

It should be remembered that while Hanukkah is a joyous feast, it is primarily a feast that recognizes and recalls the marvelous providence of God, and His strength to those who trust in Him. It is also a feast that commemorates a miracle, a miracle of God in making the oil burn for eight days instead of only one.

God is the center of the Feast of Hanukkah, and all the celebration revolves around His mercy, His goodness, His love and His help in need. This is truly a cause for joy, in which all can share.

Hanukkah and Advent

THE first day of Hanukkah—or the first Night of Hanukkah, to be more accurate—always falls on the 25th day of the Hebrew month of Kislev. And this usually comes in early or mid-December of our calendar.

Hanukkah has been celebrated on this day since the Temple was rededicated 164 years before the birth of Christ. In fact, Mary and Joseph celebrated Hanukkah in their day, and Our Lord also celebrated it with the Jewish people of His day. The apostles must have known and loved Hanukkah since the days of their boyhood.

The feast is mentioned once in the Gospels. St. John says that ". . . there took place in Jerusalem the feast of the Dedication; and it was winter. And Jesus was walking in the temple, in Solomon's portico." John 10:22,23.

Here is Our Lord in the very Temple which was recaptured by the Maccabees, and rededicated only 164 years before He was born. Now He could fulfill the prophecies and the Law, which He was doing at that very time.

December 25th was not celebrated as the date of Our Lord's birth until about the 3rd or 4th century. The actual date of Our Lord's birth is not known. It had been celebrated on many different days in different parts of the world. To establish some sort of uniformity regarding Christmas, the 25th of December was finally chosen as the date for this feast for the universal Church.

Eventually, the four weeks of Advent were established as a preparation for the coming of Christ. And because of this sequence, the feast of Hanukkah will come some time during Advent. But Christians should remember—that Hanukkah came first—that the decision to make December 25th the date of Christ's birth was a sheer coincidence which brought the two feasts into the close calendar relationship that exists to this day.

As it so happens through Providence, one of the Sundays of Advent is called "Gaudete Sunday"—a Sunday for rejoicing. It may not be unusual (as happened in 1963) for Gaudete Sunday to fall right during one of the eight days of Hanukkah! So Catholics and Jews can rejoice at the same time. The lights from the Hanukkah menorah and the lights from the Advent candles both shine forth into the night that envelops the world.

In our own home, we keep a Hanukkah menorah in the center of our Advent Wreath with the 4 Advent Candles around the outside of the wreath. And we light the Shamus (Servant) candle for the menorah from one of the Advent candles to show the harmony that exists between these two feasts of light.

We find no conflict here—only harmony, happiness and hope. Hope for a world of harmony and happiness between people. . .

Since the custom of using the Advent Wreath comes from an old pagan rite, (something about a fire wheel as I understand it) there surely could be no harm in incorporating an ancient Jewish rite into the preparations for Christmas—an ancient Jewish rite observed by the Holy Family itself!

And since this is done in the privacy of the home, surely no scandal is given to anyone. Since there are eight candles on the Hanukkah menorah, perhaps one of the 8 Beatitudes could be recited with each new candle lighted until all 8 Beatitudes are recited on the 8th and last night of Hanukkah. Then simply leave the menorah in the center of the Advent Wreath until the Crib is put up the night before Christmas. Then perhaps the menorah can be placed somewhere near the Crib—unlit. Perhaps one candle—the Shamus—can be left standing, representing Christ, the Light of the World, whose birth is portrayed in the Crib.

"And the Light of Israel shall be as a fire and the holy one thereof as a flame."—Isaia 10:17.

A Catholic Hanukkah Program

IT was a request from Sister Letitia Marie, S.S.J., principal of Bishop Kearney High School in Brooklyn, that resulted in—or I should say, inspired—the following program.

Working with Sister Letitia and the Sister in charge of the program, Sister Alice Patricia, we finally worked out these details for a high school Christmas Hanukkah program.

Since Bishop Kearney High School is an all-girl school, all the participants were girls. In an all-boy school, all the participants would of course have been all boys. The ideal arrangement, in my opinion, is for both boys and girls, or for men and women, to participate in this program. But it will be effective with any group, men or women, boys or girls, large group or small. Simply adapt this for your own needs.

CHARACTERS NEEDED:

8 women for Old Testament Living Menorah

8 men for New Testament Living Menorah

1 Shamus (Servant) who stands in center of O.T. menorah at beginning of the program. This could be a priest, seminarian, Brother or layman. If at all possible, it should be a man since the Shamus represents Christ, the Servant—and also the Light of the World.

1 Commentator—possibly a Jewish Catholic or well-informed person.

1 Master of Ceremonies.

1 Stage Director—for lights, curtain, microphones, etc.

1 Choirmaster or songleader.

(In a school, the 8 members of the O.T. Living Menorah might be taken from the Freshman and Sophomore classes. Perhaps the president of each class. And the 8 members of the N.T. Living Menorah might be taken from the Junior and Senior classes. This will give as many classes as possible, a sense of participation.)

EQUIPMENT NEEDED:

17 large candles (any colors or: All Red for O.T., Green for N.T.)
17 crowns or costumes for candle-holders
1 Hanukkah Menorah with candles.
This to stand on small table next to lectern. (see page 40)
1 Advent Wreath with 4 candles
– souvenir dreidels for each member of audience. Plastic dreidels can be purchased in Hebrew or Israeli religious supply store—cost about 3c each. Come in variety of colors. (See page 30-B)

NOTE: The crown, the candle or the costume worn by the Shamus should be different from any of the others. Remember that the Shamus represents Christ.

STAGE DIRECTIONS:

If possible, entire action should take place on stage. If lighting permits, bathe stage in all blue lights simulating Night. Front curtain is closed. Auditorium lights are out.

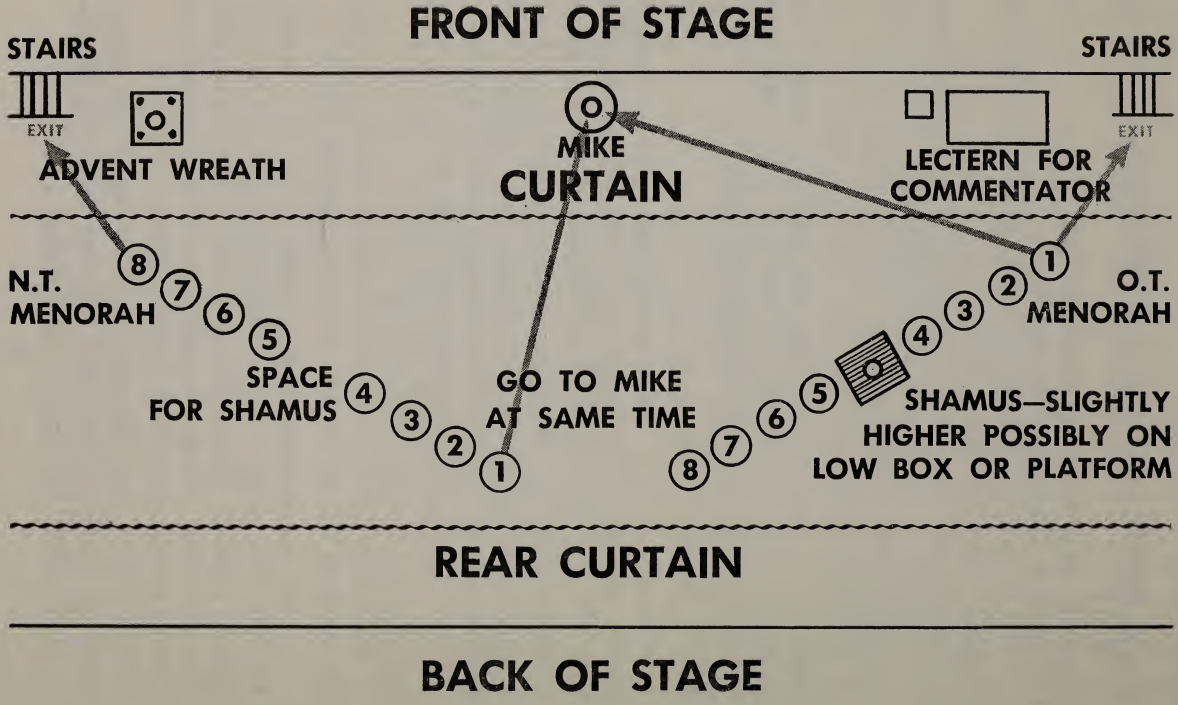
The two Living Menorahs are in place on stage—in "V" formation, behind the closed curtain. See diagram. One standing mike is in front center of stage near footlights.

The Commentator will take his place at lectern with another mike at right front of stage.

An Advent Wreath is on small table at left front of stage. One candle is lighted for each Sunday of Advent passed.

As the Shamus lights the candles of the O.T. Living Menorah—after program begins—bring up pink or a few white lights to simulate dawn coming up and cut down on blue lights somewhat. When all candles of Living Menorahs are lit, stage should be bathed in pink light.

When the Living Menorahs have left stage, front curtain, which was slowly opened when program began, should now be drawn closed. See diagram on next page . . .


FRONT OF STAGE
STAIRS
STAIRS
EXIT
EXIT
ADVENT WREATH
MIKE
CURTAIN
LECTERN FOR
COMMENTATOR
N.T.
MENORAH
O.T.
MENORAH
8
7
6
5
4
3
2
1
SPACE
FOR SHAMUS
GO TO MIKE
AT SAME TIME
SHAMUS—SLIGHTLY
HIGHER POSSIBLY ON
LOW BOX OR PLATFORM
REAR CURTAIN
BACK OF STAGE

THE PROGRAM BEGINS:

As people enter auditorium, perhaps some recorded Hanukkah music might be playing softly, on phonograph or tape recorder. Ask local rabbi where to get or borrow.

Choir sings "Come O Come, Emmanuel" when program officially begins. When they finish, Master of Ceremonies comes out to mike in front center of stage and gives brief introduction to program. He then introduces the Commentator.

Commentator comes out to Lectern at right-front of stage and tells the audience what is going to happen . . . the significance of Hanukkah and Christmas, the harmony that exists between these two feasts, etc.

As Commentator is speaking, front curtain slowly draws apart and reveals the two Living Menorahs standing in place in "V" formation on stage. The curtain opens completely but slowly.

The stage is bathed in blue light. The auditorium is in darkness.

As the Commentator lights his Shamus candle in the little menorah he has on small table to the left of his lectern, and intones the Hebrew prayer said at lighting of candle, the living Shamus in center of O. T. Menorah gets light from the Advent wreath at Left-Front of stage, comes back to light the candle held by No. 1 of the O.T. Living Menorah. On way back, Shamus stops at front mike and says: "I am in your midst as a Servant." Luke 22:27. Then Shamus proceeds to light candle of No. 1 in O.T. Menorah.

Commentator has explained that only the Shamus candle may be lighted with a match. The other candles must be lighted by the Shamus, the servant.

He also explains that the Servant candle is called the Shamus which in Hebrew means "Servant." The Sexton of a synagogue is called a Shamus because he is the servant of the congregation. Our Lord said that He came to serve, as a servant.

The O.T. is filled with light, and we are going to show how the Light of the O.T. was transferred—or fulfilled—by the Light of the N.T.

When the candle of No. 1 in the O.T. menorah has been lit, he goes to the center mike—as No. 1 of the N.T. menorah joins him there.

The O.T. candle recites the prayer (pgs. 21-22) he has been given from the O.T. He then lights the candle of the N.T. No. 1 who then recites his prayer from the N.T. (pages 22-24). Each one's prayer can be typed on small index card.

When candles are lit, both return to their own places.

Meanwhile, the Shamus has lighted Candle No. 2 of the O.T. menorah. When No. 1 returns, No. 2 goes up to the mike in center of stage, joined there by No. 2 of the N.T. menorah.

The O.T. with candle lit, recites his prayer from the O.T., then lights the candle of the N.T. With candle lit, the N.T. recites his prayer from the N.T. Then both return to their own places.

The same is done with each candle until all of the 8 candles in the Living Menorahs have recited their prayers at the front center mike and returned to their places.

Meanwhile, the Commentator has been lighting the little candles on his menorah next to his Lectern.

After all living candles have returned to their places, the Shamus again steps out from his place in the middle of the O.T. Living Menorah, proceeds to the mike in center of stage, and says:

"Again Jesus spoke to them saying: I am the Light of the World. He who follows me does not walk in the darkness, but will have the light of life . . ." John 8:12.

After reciting this, the Shamus now turns left and proceeds to the space that has been kept open in the center of the NEW Testament Living Menorah. This indicates the fulfillment of God's Light from the O.T. to the New.

As soon as the Shamus reaches his new position and stands (on small low platform if possible) the Choir now sings the Hebrew song: *Ma' oz Tzur*" (see back cover)

After a few moments, while choir is still singing, the O.T. Living Menorah faces right, the N.T. Living Menorah faces left—and both exit off stage, down the stairs if any, and go to back of auditorium where they blow candles out and take seats in back row.

This gives Commentator a chance to say, later on, how significant it is to take our light back into a world of darkness, where we light up with joy and truth and godliness, the dark corners of life around us . . . etc.

If there are no stairs off stage, have Living Menorahs exit into the wings and draw front curtain closed.

Commentator remains standing at Lectern all this time and waits for choir to finish *Ma'oz Tzur.* He then gives a 10 or 15 minute talk on the significance of what the audience has just seen. His little menorah remains burning on the little table next to the Lectern as he speaks.

He makes a strong point about the harmony that exists between Hanukkah as a preparation, and Christmas as the fulfillment. (See pages 6 to 8)

When he has finished, he exits off stage and Master of Ceremonies returns to center mike, thanks the Commentator and all who participated in the program, and then introduces the person who will give the concluding remarks.

This may be the Principal of the school, the Moderator or Spiritual Director of an organization, the Superior of a Community, or whoever is designated to make the concluding remarks.

At the conclusion of the program, choir may sing another verse of *Ma'oz Tzur,* or repeat *Come, O Come, Emmanuel.* Hanukkah records may be played again as audience exits.

NOTE: Entire program need not take more than one hour.

The dreidel souvenirs may be distributed to audience while choir is singing, or at conclusion of the program. (See Appendix: page 30)

Biblical Selections

Note: Text for each participant should be typed on small index card and read —if not memorized.

ON LIGHT:

To be recited by Shamus (Servant) *at beginning:*

I am in your midst as a servant."—Luke 22:27.

—and then at very end:

"Again Jesus spoke to them saying: I am the Light of the world. He who follows me does not walk in the darkness, but will have the light of life."—John 8:12.

SELECTIONS FROM OLD TESTAMENT

Thy word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my paths. —Psalm 118:105.

I the Lord have called thee in justice, and taken thee by the hand, and preserved thee.

And I have given thee for a convenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles.—Isaia 42:6.

For with Thee is the fountain of life; and in Thy light we shall see light.—Psalm 35:10.

And under his glory shall be kindled a burning; as it were the burning of a fire.

And the light of Israel shall be as a fire and the Holy One thereof as a flame.—Isaia 10:16-17.

O house of Jacob, come ye and let us walk in the light of the Lord.—Isaia 2:15.

And he said: It is a small thing that thou shouldst be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to convert the dregs of Israel.

Behold, I have given thee to be the light of the Gentiles, that thou mayst be my salvation even to the farthest parts of the earth.—Isaia 49:6.

The Lord is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear?—Psalm 26:1.

Send forth Thy light and Thy truth: they have conducted me and brought me unto thy holy hill and into thy tabernacles.—(in the Mass) Psalm 42:3.

The light of the just giveth joy: but the lamp of the wicked shall be put out.—Proverbs 13:9.

And Moses stretched forth his hand toward heaven: and there came horrible darkness in all the land of Egypt for three days.

No man saw his brother nor moved himself out of the place where he was: but wheresoever the children of Israel dwelt, there was light.—Exodus 10:22-23.

Rejoice not, thou my enemy, over me, because I am fallen: I shall arise when I sit in darkness, the Lord is my light.—Micah 7:8.

NOTE: All recitations should be made in a voice that is loud, slow and clear. At the word "light" pause slightly, then continue.

SELECTIONS FROM THE NEW TESTAMENT

For so the Lord has commanded us. "I have set thee for a light to the Gentiles, to be a means of salvation to the very ends of the earth."—Acts 13:47.

The night is far advanced; the day is at hand. Let us therefore lay aside the works of darkness, and put on the armor of light.—Romans 13:12.

You are the light of the world. A city set on a mountain cannot be hidden, neither do men light a lamp and put it under the measure, but upon a lampstand, so as to give light to all in the house.—Matt. 5:14-15.

I have come to cast fire on the earth, and what will I but that it be kindled?—Luke 12:49.

Again a new commandment I am writing to you, and this is true both in him and in you.
Because the darkness has passed away and the true light is now shining.—I John 2:8.

For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk then, as children of light.—Ephesians 5:8.

Jesus said to them: "Yet a little while the light is among you. Walk while you have the light that darkness may not overtake you. He who walks in the darkness does not know where he goes.
"While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light."—John 12:35,36.

Even so, let your light shine before men, in order that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.—Matt. 5:16.

In him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shines in the darkness; and the darkness grasped it not.—John 1:4-5.

If we say that we have fellowship with him and walk in darkness, we lie, and are not practicing the truth.
But if we walk in the light as he also is the light, we have fellowship with one another.—I John 1:6-7.

For everyone who does evil hates the light, and does

not come to the light that his deeds may not be exposed.

But he who does the truth comes to the light that his deeds may be made manifest, for they have been performed in God.—John 3:20-21.

There was a man, one sent from God, whose name was John.

This man came as a witness, to bear witness concerning the light, that all might believe through him.

He was not the light but was to bear witness to the light.

It was the true light that enlightens every man who comes into the world.—John 1:6-9.

NOTE: Other selections on LIGHT may be found in both Old and New Testaments with the help of any good Concordance. Also look under FIRE.

OTHER SELECTIONS CONCERNING LIGHT

In the long history of the world, only a few generations have been granted the role of defending freedom in its hour of maximum danger.

I do not shrink from this responsibility—I welcome it. I do not believe that any of us would exchange places with any other people of any other generation.

The energy, the faith, the devotion which we bring to this endeavor will light our country and all who serve it—and the glow from that fire can truly light the world.

—Pres. John F. Kennedy, Inaugural Address.

I shall light a candle of understanding in thine heart, which shall not be put out.—Apocrypha, 2 Esdras 14:25.

Hail, holy light! offspring of heav'n first-born.

—John Milton, Paradise Lost, Book 3.

Christ and Hanukkah

WE know that Christ, who was a Jew, observed Jewish ritual, Jewish practices and Jewish holy days. He Himself said, during the Sermon on the Mount:

"Think not that I came to destroy the law or the prophets. I came not to destroy, but to fulfill."—Matt. 5:17.

Almost all Jewish festivals come from Old Testament days, although there have undoubtedly been some minor changes in the observance of these feast days or holy days over the centuries. Fundamentally, however, the meaning and observance of each Jewish feast day have remained remarkably unchanged.

We know that Our Lord observed the Passover. He used the Passover Seder to institute the sacraments of the Holy Eucharist and Holy Orders. In fact, the last Passover Seder of Our Lord's earthly life became the first Mass of the New Covenant. (See "The Paschal Meal," The Grail, Grailville, Loveland, Ohio—35c)

Our Lord—as well as Mary, Joseph, and the Apostles—also undoubtedly observed the Jewish feasts of Purim, Tabernacles (Succoth), Shavuos (Pentecost—not the Christian Pentecost), and Hanukkah.

Yom Kippur and Rosh Hashonah may also have been observed by Our Lord but we are not absolutely certain of these. Perhaps they were observed in simpler form . . .

It would be interesting to think that when Our Lord was a little boy, He, or St. Joseph, lighted the Hanukkah menorah just as Jewish children do today. In those days, of course, there would have been no candles, but oil wicks in some sort of an Alladin's Lamp with 8 openings.

And it would also be interesting to speculate on whether Our Lord consciously used the term "Light" and "Light of the World" as a sort of fulfillment of the feast of Hanukkah.

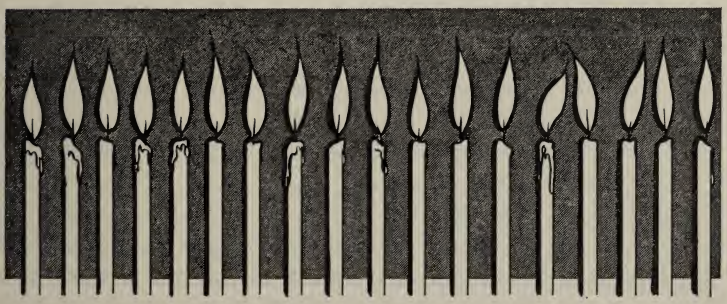
However, whether He did or not, we can do it today, as demonstrated in this program.

All the elements for fulfillment are built into the story and the observance of Hanukkah as a feast of both Light and Dedication.

For Christmas is also a Feast of both Light and Dedication. Our Lord is the living Light and the living Temple of God.

It seems more than a coincidence to find Hanukkah and Christmas which were so close historically, coming so close together in the liturgical calendar of both Jews and Christians.

And how appropriate that Hanukkah should precede Christmas in the calendar, just as it was in time, in the providence of God. I think that God means for these two feasts to move together with increasing harmony for Christians and Jews—for the rest of time . . .



For with Thee is the fountain of life; and in Thy light we shall see light.—Psalm 35:10

Catholics and Hanukkah

OF course, Hanukkah is not a Catholic feast day. Never has been.

But it has been known for certain customs of pagan or unknown origin, to acquire Christian meanings, and find their way into Christian and Catholic life.

The Advent Wreath and the Christmas Tree are only two examples. There are undoubtedly others: Easter eggs . . .

Jewish customs of ancient origin have also found their way into Catholic life and liturgy. Some examples of Jewish customs that have become part of Catholic life and worship are these:

The use of incense.

The use of candles.

The use of holy water and holy oil.

The use of the Psalms in the Divine Office, the Mass and other liturgical rites.

The washing of the hands at the Lavabo of the Mass.

The first part of the Mass which is a close counterpart of the ancient synagogue service.

The Dominus Vobiscum in the Mass.

The Sanctus of the Mass.

The Hebrew words "Amen" "Hosanna," and "Alleluia" in Catholic prayers.

The Old Testament Epistles in all but one of the 40 Masses of Lent.

The numerous Readings from the Old Testament in the Ember Day Masses.

Palms—on Palm Sunday.

These are but a few examples where Jewish prayers and customs have found their way into Catholic life and into the liturgy of the Church. There are many, many more examples that could be cited.

Because of the non-liturgical use of the significance of

Hanukkah in a Catholic program, we find no prohibition against such use. Rather, we find many reasons for a closer relationship between Christmas and Hanukkah. The ultimate result could only be a greater appreciation of our own Catholic Faith, and a better understanding of the Jewish people with whom we have so much in common.

Some Catholics are afraid of anything "Jewish." They think that whatever is Jewish is automatically opposed to everything Catholic. They see in Hanukkah a Jewish plot to undermine and eventually destroy Christmas.

And just as there are Catholics who misunderstand the Jewish people, so also there are Jews who misunderstand Christmas and Christians. There is no reason for fear or misunderstanding on the part of either Christians or Jews, at least, not today.

It is the hope that Christmas–Hanukkah programs such as this will help in dispelling misunderstanding, and in fostering the feelings of fraternal love–of community harmony, and of serious attempts to understand those of other faiths. Down with suspicion of our fellow men–up with dedication to God and man! Light the lamps of brotherly love . . .

Beatitudes

1. Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
2. Blessed are the meek, for they shall possess the land.
3. Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.
4. Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after justice, for they shall have their fill.
5. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.
6. Blessed are the clean of heart, for they shall see God.
7. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God.
8. Blessed are they that suffer persecution for justice' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

One for each Hanukkah candle for Catholic families.

Jews and Hanukkah

THE Jewish people have been celebrating Hanukkah since the year 164 B.C. It has never been a major Jewish festival such as Passover, or a holy day such as Yom Kippur or Rosh Hashonah.

But because of its proximity to Christmas—over which the Jewish people had absolutely no control—it has become a more important feast than it might have been if it came —let us say, during July.

When the entire world is celebrating Christmas, with all the bangles and the baubles and the carols and the trees and the gift-giving—the Jewish people have serious questions to answer from their children. "Why don't we Jews celebrate Christmas?"

In order to satisfy their children at Christmas time, so that they do not feel like orphans in the storm, the feast of Hanukkah has been magnified somewhat, by the Jewish community.

There was always gift-giving during Hanukkah, but perhaps now it is on a larger scale than it might have otherwise been. No Christmas trees adorned the Jewish home at Hanukkah time, but now, because of something that happened on a radio or TV program ("The Goldbergs") there is a tree in some Jewish homes, but it is called, "A Hanukkah Bush!"

In our pluralistic society, in this country, there is room for everyone, and we can all learn from one another . . . and be the better for it. The Jewish feast of Hanukkah is inspiring and meaningful, not only to Jews, but to everyone.

Hanukkah is a story of courage, of faith, of determination to serve God, even at the cost of one's life—and it is a wonderful story of dedication to God, for all men.

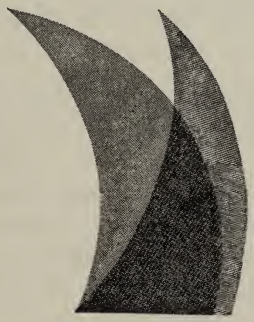
The story can be read in the First and Second Books of Maccabees at the end of the Old Testament (in the Catholic

Bible only, as it so happens). And a summary of the story is given in this booklet on page nine.

I think it would be nice to ask a Jewish friend to explain Hanukkah to you—or better yet, have him invite you to his home at Hanukkah time, to observe how the Jewish people commemorate this beautiful feast.

Since the Jewish people do not believe that Christ is the Messiah, the fulfillment of Hanukkah by Christmas would not fit with their beliefs. It is of tremendous significance for Christians, but for Jewish people, Hanukkah is only part of the story; a very beautiful part—but a story without an end.

However, even as such, Hanukkah as a Feast of Lights, as a Feast of Dedication, still has much meaning for Jewish people. Christians should respect the sincerity and the dedication of the Jewish people, and rejoice if a feast such as Hanukkah brings them closer to God.



Lord, make me an instrument of Your peace. Where there is hatred, let me sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; . . .

—Prayer of St. Francis of Assisi for Peace.

Appendix

The Hanukkah Menorah A.

The menorah is a candelabrum. The usual menorah in Jewish synagogues is a seven-branch menorah. This goes back to the First Temple, I believe, when the first seven-branched menorah was hammered out of solid gold.

Because Hanukkah was an 8-day observance, a special menorah had to be used. And there had to be room for the Shamus candle which would light all the eight candles from night to night. Therefore, the Hanukkah menorah is an 8-branch candelabrum plus an extra holder for the Shamus. The Shamus candle is usually higher than the other eight, or off to one side. The traditional Hanukkah menorah has the shamus candle in the center of the menorah, over a Star of David, raised above the line of the other eight candles.

The Dreidel B.

The dreidel (pronounced "draydl") is a spinner, or a sort of top, used to play games. On its four sides it has the Hebrew letters that stand for N, G, H and SH. These are the first letters of the Hebrew phrase that means: "A miracle happened there!" Even the games honor and glorify God! It is usually used by children in a game of "Put & Take" with candies, trinkets, nuts or coins as the pot that is played for. Dreidels come in all colors and sizes.

Bibliography C.

1. Your Neighbor Celebrates (pp 19-21) $ .25
   — Rabbi Gilbert & Tarcov
   Anti-Defamation League, 315 Lexington Ave., NYC 16
2. Guide to Jewish Holy days (pp 208-236) $1.75
   — Hayyim Schauss
   Schocken Books, 67 Park Ave., NYC 16

3. This is My God (pp 99-106) $3.95
   — Herman Wouk
   Doubleday, Garden City, L.I., NY
4. Hanukkah (74 pages) $1.25
   Nat'l Jewish Welfare Board, 145 E. 32nd St., NYC 16
5. Chanukah, Feast of Lights. 60 pages $1.00
   — Deborah Weinstein
   Mizrachi Nat'l Educ. Comm., 1133 Broadway, N.Y.C.
6. Ancient Israel (pp 510-514)
   — Roger DeVaux, O.P.
   McGraw-Hill Book Co., 330 W. 42nd St., NYC 36

Hanukkah Prayers D.

On the first of the eight nights of Hanukkah, one candle is kindled and on each successive evening the number of candles is increased by one.

- *Before kindling the lights the following prayers are said:*

"Blessed art Thou, Lord our God, Ruler of the Universe. Thou hast sanctified us with Thy commandments and ordained that we kindle the Hanukkah light.

"Blessed art Thou, Lord our God, Ruler of the universe, who wrought wonderful deliverances for our fathers in days of old at this season."

- *On the first night, this blessing is added:*

"Blessed art Thou, Lord our God, Ruler of the universe, that Thou hast given us life and sustenance and brought us to this happy season."

- *Before kindling the lights, the following may be chanted:*

"These lights we kindle to mark the marvelous liberation, and the wonders which Thou didst perform for our ancestors through Thy Holy priests. Wherefore these lights are sacred all the eight days of Hanukkah, and we are not permitted to make profane use of them, but only to look at them so as to give thanks to Thee for Thy miraculous saving providence."

- *This prayer is said in the synagogue during Hanukkah:*

"We thank Thee also for the miraculous and mighty deeds of liberation wrought by Thee, and for Thy victories in the battles our forefathers fought in days of old, at this season of the year.

"In the days of the High Priest Mattathias, son of Johanan, of the Hasmomean family, a tyrannical power rose up against Thy people Israel to compel them to forsake Thy Torah, and to force them to transgress Thy Commandments. In Thine abundant mercy Thou didst stand by them in time of distress. Thou didst rise to their defense and didst vindicate their cause.

"Thou didst bring retribution upon the evil doers, delivering the strong into the hands of the weak, the many into the hands of the few, the wicked into the hands of the just, and the arrogant into the hands of those devoted to Thy Torah.

"Thou didst thus make Thy greatness and holiness known in Thy world, and didst bring great deliverance to Israel. Then Thy children came into Thy dwelling place, cleansed the Temple, purified the Sanctuary, kindled lights in Thy sacred courts, and they designated these eight days of Hanukkah for giving thanks and praise unto Thy great name."

A NOTE OF CAUTION!

Because of the extensive use of fire in this program, it is suggested that one or two Firemen (actual or volunteer) be included in the program.

If the action is to be performed on a stage, have one Fireman stationed in the wings, on each side of the stage, near a Fire Extinguisher.

Small, push-button extinguishers might be kept in strategic places for any emergency, as well as one or two blankets.

Caution all participants to Be Careful!

MA'OZ TZUR — (ROCK OF AGES)

An Ancient Hebrew Song

Rock of Ages, let our song
Praise Thy saving power;
    Thou, amidst the raging foes
    Wast our shelt'ring tower.
Furious they assailed us;
But Thine arm availed us,
    And Thy Word
    Broke their sword
When our own strength failed us.
Kindling new the holy lamps,
Priest approved in suffering,
    Purified the nation's shrine
    Brought to God their offering.
And his courts surrounding,
Hear, in joy abounding,
    Happy throngs
    Singing songs
With a mighty sounding.
Children of the martyr-race,
Whether free or fettered,
    Wake the echoes of the songs,
    Where ye may be scattered.
Yours the message cheering,
That the time is nearing,
    Which will see
    All men free,
Tyrants disappearing.

(For music, see No. 4 in Bibliography, Appendix: C.)